

Technical Documentation for 1992-2001 Survey Years

Survey Description

The United States Census Bureau conducts an Annual Survey of Government Employment, as authorized by law under Title 13, United States Code, Section 182. Alternatively, every five years, in years ending in a "2" or "7", a Census of Governments, including an Employment portion, is conducted under Title 13, Section 161. For both the Census and the annual surveys, the employment detail is equivalent. There was no survey for October 1996.

Census data for 1992 and 1997 are available for approximately 87,000 state and local governments. In non-Census years, a sample survey of approximately 11,000-13,000 local governments and all state governments is conducted and estimates are developed.

This survey provides data for March (October prior to 1997) on full-time and part-time employment, part-time employee hours worked, full-time equivalent employment, and payroll statistics by type of government (state, county, city, township, special district, and school district), and by governmental function (elementary and secondary education, higher education, police protection, fire protection, financial administration, other government administration, judicial and legal, highways, public welfare, solid waste management, sewerage, parks and recreation, health, hospitals, water supply, electric power, gas supply, transit, natural resources, correction, libraries, air transportation, water transport and terminals, other education, state liquor stores, social insurance administration, and housing and community development).

Employment and employees: Employment refers to all persons gainfully employed by and performing services for a government. Employees include all persons paid for personal services performed, including persons paid from Federally funded programs, paid elected or appointed officials, persons in a paid leave status, and persons paid on a per meeting, annual, semiannual, or quarterly basis. Unpaid officials, pensioners, persons whose work is performed on a fee basis, and contractors and their employees are excluded from the count of employees. Full-time employees are defined to include those persons whose hours of work represent full-time employment in their employer government; part-time employees are those persons who work less than the standard number of hours for full-time work in their employer government.

Full-time equivalent employment: A computed statistic representing the number of full-time employees that could have been employed if the reported number of hours worked by part-time employees had been worked by full-time employees. This statistic is calculated separately for each function of a government by dividing the "part-time hours paid" by the standard number of hours for full-time

employees in the particular government and then adding the resulting quotient to the number of full-time employees.

Payroll amounts represent gross payrolls for the 1-month period of March (31 days). Prior to 1997, the reference month was October. The gross payroll includes all salaries, wages, fees, commissions, bonuses, or awards paid to employees during the pay period that included the date of March 12 (prior to 1997 it was October 12). Payroll amounts reported for a period other than 1-month were converted to represent an amount for the month of March (October). All payroll figures are in current whole dollars and have not been adjusted for inflation.

Conversion of a reported payroll to a payroll amount that would have been paid during a 31-day month is accomplished by multiplying the reported payroll by an appropriate factor. For example, a 2-week payroll is multiplied by 2.214, a 1-week payroll is multiplied by 4.429, and a twice-a-month payroll is multiplied by 2.

Average earnings: Average March (October prior to 1997) earnings for full-time employees can be calculated by dividing the full-time payroll by the number of full-time employees.

Employment and payrolls of governments are classified according to the major function or activity of the agency, office or other organizational entity in which the individual is employed.

For definitions of the functions and additional information about the Employment Survey refer to the following source: Chapter 5 of the ["The Government Finance and Employment Classification Manual"](#).

Statistical Reliability

Data that are derived from a census are not subject to sampling variability, but data from the annual sample survey are subject to sampling error.

The statistics in this report that are based wholly or partly on data from the sample are apt to differ somewhat from the results of a survey covering all governments, but otherwise conducted using the same schedules and procedures. Estimates based on a sample survey are subject to sampling variability. The particular sample used is one of a large number of all possible samples of the same size that could have been selected using the same sample design. Each of the possible samples would yield somewhat different results.

The standard error is a measure of the variation among the estimates from all possible samples and thus is a measure of the precision with which an estimate from a particular sample approximates the average results of all possible samples.

Each viewable table contains a column that gives users the coefficients of variation that have been computed for these estimates. The coefficient of variation is the estimated standard error expressed as a percent of the estimated total or proportion.

State government employment and payroll data are not subject to sampling. Consequently, state-local aggregates shown here for individual states are more reliable (on a relative standard error basis) than the local government estimates they include. Estimates of major United States totals for local governments are subject to a computed sampling variability of less than one-half of 1.0 percent. State and local government totals are generally subject to sampling variability of less than 3.0 percent.

Whether the data come from a census or a sample, the data are also subject to nonsampling errors such as inaccuracies in classification, response, and processing. Efforts were made at all phases of collection, processing, and tabulation to minimize errors. However, the data are still subject to errors from estimating for missing data, errors from misreported data, errors from miscoding, and difficulties in identifying every unit that should be in the report. Every effort was made to keep such errors to a minimum through care in examining, editing, and tabulating the data reported by government officials.

Nonresponse

When a local governments does not provide data requested in the Employment survey, totals are derived from:

1. The Census Bureau's recent annual surveys of government employment (surveys that request similar government employment and pay data for a sample of local governments) or the prior Census of Governments; or
2. Imputation procedures that use current data reported by like types of governments of similar size in the same state, or use secondary data sources.

In noncensus years, the response rate is about 84%. In census years, the response rate is approximately 80%.

Geographic Coverage

State and local government data are provided for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Local governments include counties, municipalities, townships, special districts, and school districts.

Collection of Statistics on Government Employment and Payroll

Data in these files are based on information obtained in the Annual Survey of Government Employment. Federal Government data were compiled by Census Bureau staff from records of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. Approximately one-half of the state governments provided data from central payroll records for all or most of their agencies/institutions. Data for agencies and institutions for the remaining state governments were obtained by mail canvass questionnaires. Local government data were generally requested by mail canvass questionnaires except for elementary and secondary school system data in Florida, North Carolina, North Dakota, and Washington which were supplied by special arrangements with the state education agency in each of these states.

Federal Government Employment Data

Federal Government employment data, full-time and part-time, are compiled by the Census Bureau from data collected by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in two separate surveys. Data by governmental function are for October from 1992 through 1995 and for March beginning in 1997. These data are based on the Monthly Report of Federal Civilian Employment (Standard Form 113A).

Employee counts are the on-board "head count" as of the end of the report period. The data collected for this survey include all Federal civilian employees, including seasonal and intermittent employees, and employees on foreign assignments residing outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Employees of the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the Defense Intelligence Agency are not included in any of the data presented by government function. Federal judges, members of Congress and their staffs, employees of the Congressional Budget Office, and elected (with the exception of the President) and appointed officials of the Executive Branch are included. Employees of non-appropriated funds of defense activities are not classified as Federal employees; therefore, they are excluded from both OPM surveys.

Three functions apply only to the Federal Government and have no counterpart at the state and local government levels: national defense and international relations, postal service, and space research and technology.

The payroll data are a total monthly payroll only. There is no detail available for full-time or part-time employee payrolls.

Federal employment data by state were collected biennially in even numbered years as of December 31st of the survey year. These data include total employment counts only. There is no detail for full-time employment, part-time employment or payrolls. Excluded from the data are seasonal and intermittent

employees; employees on foreign assignments residing outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia; and employees of the Public Health Service's Commissioned Corps, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Included in the total count of Federal employees by state, but not allocated by state, are: Federal judges and other employees of the Federal Courts; and employees of the Department of Justice's Federal Bureau of Investigation who are employed outside the District of Columbia. Members of Congress and their staffs, employees of the Congressional Budget Office, and elected (with the exception of the President) and appointed officials of the Executive Branch working in the District of Columbia are included in employee counts for the District of Columbia.

Filenames and Descriptions

Data files for state and local and local only government employment and payroll estimates are available, in addition to the viewable tables. These can be downloaded from the Internet site. The data represent the month of March (October prior to 1997), as explained previously. This section describes the files and the naming conventions.

Viewable Tables

Federal Tables: Two different tables of Federal Government data are available. Both are ASCII text files.

The first is Federal Employment by governmental function. This is available on an annual basis under the filename structure: YYFEDFUN.TXT, where YY = year of the data (i.e., 95 is for 1995).

Data for Federal Employment by state are available for each even-numbered year from 1990 to 2002. The file names are YYFEDST.TXT (for data from 1990-2000) and 02FEDERALSTATE.TXT (for data from 2002).

State Tables: These can be saved as ASCII text files. The file name structure is: YYSTXX.TXT

YY = year of data (i.e. 95 for 1995)

ST = state data

XX = the standard two character state abbreviation

Examples are:

95STMD.txt - 1995, state file for Maryland.

95STCT.txt -1995, state file for Connecticut.

State and Local Tables: These can be saved as ASCII text files. The file name structure is: YYSTLXX.TXT

YY = year of data (i.e. 95 for 1995)

STL = state and local data

XX = the standard two character state abbreviation

Examples are:

95STLMI.txt - 1995, state and local file for Michigan.

95STLMN.txt -1995, state and local file for Minnesota.

Local Tables: These can be saved as ASCII text files. The file name structure is: YYLOCXX.TXT

YY = year of data (i.e. 95 for 1995)

LOC = local data

XX = the standard two character state abbreviation

Examples are:

95LOCMI.txt - 1995 local data file for Michigan.

95LOCMN.txt -1995 local data file for Minnesota.

Spreadsheet Files

In addition to the individual viewable tables described above, the tables are also available for downloading in a spreadsheet format. This is an Excel spreadsheet file (.xls filename extension). It yields content identical to the viewable tables. In addition to total employees, the file includes numbers on full-time and part-time employees and their gross payroll.

State data: the file name structure is yystall.xls

yy = year of data (i.e. 95 for 1995)

stall = state data for all 50 states, including District of Columbia

State and Local data: the file name structure is yystlall.xls

yy = year of data (i.e. 95 for 1995)

stlall = state and local data for all 50 states, including District of Columbia

Local data: the file name structure is yylocall.xls

yy = year of data (i.e. 95 for 1995)

locall = local data for all 50 states, including District of Columbia

Fixed-length ASCII Text Files: These are downloadable ASCII text files and are available for both the State and State and Local government levels. The files contain detailed employment and payroll amounts by government totals and item code detail. Each item code represents a governmental function category (police protection, hospitals, fire protection, and so forth). The levels of detail for each geographic state area include state, state plus local, and local as well as a U.S. total record.

State data files: The filename structure of the state data file is yystate.dat
yy = year of data (i.e. 95 for 1995)

Along with the state data file, the state government identification file allows the user to translate the ID's in the state data file to the state names. The filename structure for the state identification file is yystate.id
yy = year of data (i.e. 95 for 1995)

State and Local Government and Local only files
(yyempest.dat for non-Census years and yyemptot.dat for Census years)

State/Local Employment and Payroll Data File: This is a downloadable ASCII text, fixed-length file. It contains detailed employment and payroll amounts by state and local government totals and item code detail, each item code representing a governmental function category (police protection, hospitals, fire protection, and so forth). The levels of detail for each geographic state area include state, state plus local, and local as well as a U.S. total record.

The data file name structure is: yyempest.dat for non-Census years and yyemptot.dat for Census years.

yy = year of data (i.e. 95 for 1995)
empest.dat = employment and payroll data, state/local estimates

To interpret the ID's on the data file, one needs to download the State/Local Identification File. This file is also an ASCII text, fixed-length file.

The ID file name structure is: yyempest.id for non-Census years and yyemptot.id for Census years

yy = year of data (i.e. 95 for 1995)
empest.id = employment and payroll identification file, state/local estimates

The record layouts for the above files are contained in the next section including descriptions of the item codes.

Individual Unit File: This is a zipped file with the file name structure yyempst.zip. When unzipped, it creates a fixed length, ASCII text file with the file

name structure yyempst.dat for non-Census years and yycempst.dat for Census years. When unzipped, this file is approximately 8 MB for non-Census years and 50 MB for Census years. This file contains a record for each governmental function for the sample of governments canvassed for the Annual Survey of Government Employment or all governments in Census years. It includes totals for each unit of government and the governmental function detail amounts.

yy = year of survey
empst = individual unit file

Example:

95empst.zip - 1995 zipped individual unit file, creating 95empst.dat.

Any government that contains an amount of 999999999 for its data elements is a unit of government where no information could be obtained about it from current or past surveys. This coding scheme mostly applies to special district governments.

For 2002, Education Service Agencies (ESA's) were surveyed, but non-respondents were not imputed. The ESA's are included in the Individual Unit File and the Directory Information File but not in the aggregate totals. ESA's can be identified by school level 07.

Individual Unit ID File: This is a downloadable ASCII text, fixed-length file with the file name structure yyempid.txt for non-Census years and yycempid.txt for Census years. This file is approximately 3 MB for non-Census years and 18 MB for Census years. This file contains the sample of governments canvassed in the Annual Survey of Government Employment or all governments in Census years.

The filename structure of the individual unit file is yy.empid.txt

yy = year of survey (i.e. 95 for 1995)

Example:

95empid.txt

Individual County Areas (Census Years Only): This file contains summary local government employment and payroll data for each of the individual county areas. All county area information pertains to local government data that is counties, municipalities, townships, special districts, and school districts. The file is a fixed length ASCII file. Note, this data display is only available for Census of Governments survey years (years ending in "2" or "7").

The data file name structure is: yycoar2.dat, where yy is years ending in "2" or "7"

Example:

97coar2.dat - 1997 Census year county area data file

To interpret the ID's on the data file, one needs to download the County Area Identification File. This file is also an ASCII text, fixed-length file.

The ID file name structure is: yycoar1.dat, where yy is years ending in "2" or "7"

Example:

97coar1.dat - 1997 Census year county area ID file

The record layouts for the above files are contained in the next section including item code descriptions.

Record Layouts

Identification Files: All of the identification files outlined above have a similar record layout format.

The identification files are comprised of descriptive information about each government or summary information in the file. These files have one record for each government or summary in the file.

State Identification File (yystate.id): The Government ID file is comprised of 199-character records containing descriptive information about each government in the file. This file has one record for each government in the file.

For the State files, positions 3-14 will always be zeroes because it is at the state level.

Layout of Government ID File		
Description	Length	Position
State code (states & DC in alpha sequence)	2	1 - 2
Type of government code: 0 = State	1	3 - 3
County Code (000)	3	4 - 6
Unit Identification Number (000)	3	7 - 9

Supp Code (000)	3	10 - 12
Sub Code (00)	2	13 - 14
Name of Government/Political description	64	15 - 78
Census Region Code	1	79 - 79
FILLER	30	80 - 109
FIPS State	2	110 - 111
FILLER	14	112 - 125
Population	9	126 - 134
Year of Pop	2	135 - 136
Filler	61	137 - 197
Year of Data	2	198 - 199

State/Local Identification File

(yyempest.id for non-Census years; yyemptot.id for Census years)

Layout of State/Local Identification File		
Description	Length	Position
State code (states & DC in alpha sequence)	2	1 - 2
Type of summary total code: 0 = U.S. total 1 = state/local total 2 = state only total 3 = local only total 5 = county only total 6 = municipality total only 7 = township only total 8 = special district only total 9 = school district only total	1	3 - 3
FILLER	11	4 - 14
Name of Government/Political description	64	15 - 78
Census Region Code	1	79 - 79
Summary Total Description	30	80 - 109

FILLER	88	110 - 197
Year of Data	2	198 - 199

Individual Unit ID File

(yyempid.dat for non-Census years; yycempid.dat for Census years)

Layout of Individual Unit ID File		
Description	Length	Position
State code (states & DC in alpha sequence)	2	1 - 2
Type of government code: 0 = state 1 = county 2 = municipal 3 = township 4 = special district 5 = school district 6 = U.S. government	1	3 - 3
County code	3	4 - 6
Unit identification number	3	7 - 9
Supp Code	3	10 - 12
Sub Code	2	13 - 14
Name of Government/Political description	64	15 - 78
Census Region Code	1	79 - 79
County Name	30	80 - 109
FIPS state (N/A for 2002)	2	110 - 111
FIPS county (N/A for 2002)	3	112 - 114
FIPS place (municipalities and towns)	5	115 - 119
FIPS MSA code	4	120 - 123
FIPS CMSA	2	124 - 125
Pop/Enrollment/Function Code	9	126 - 134
Year of Pop/Enrollment	2	135 - 136

School Level Code 01 = elementary only 02 = secondary only 03 = elementary and secondary 04 = higher education only 05 = special independent vocational or special education 06 = nonoperating 07 = ESA (education service agency)	2	137 - 138
FILLER	7	139 - 145
Sample Weight	6	146 - 151
FILLER	5	152 - 156
Multi-county code	30	157 - 186
Weekly Hours Code 1 = 39 or more 2 = 37.5 - 38.9 3 = 34 - 37.4 4 = 32 - 33.9 5 = 30 - 31.9	1	189 - 189
Full-time pay code 1 = monthly 2 = twice a month 3 = each 2 weeks 4 = weekly	1	190 - 190
Part-time pay code 1 = monthly 2 = twice a month 3 = each 2 weeks 4 = weekly	1	191 - 191
Number of months teachers paid	2	192 - 193
Number of months school admin paid	2	194 - 195
Number of months school other paid	2	196 - 197
Year of Data (except dependent school data) 99 = response for 1999 II = data imputed NN = no information for this unit	2	198 - 199

Year of Dependent School Data	2	200 - 201
FILLER	3	202 - 204
Survey Form Type	2	205 - 206

County Area Identification File (yycoar1.dat)

Census years only

Layout of County Area Identification File		
Description	Length	Position
State code (States & DC in alpha sequence)	2	1 - 2
FILLER	1	3 - 3
County code	3	4 - 6
FILLER	8	7 - 14
Name of Government	35	15 - 49
Political Description	29	50 - 78
Census Region Code	1	79 - 79
County Name	30	80 - 109
FIPS state	2	110 - 111
FIPS county	3	112 - 114
FILLER	5	115 - 119
FIPS MSA code (N/A in 2002)	4	120 - 123
FIPS CMSA (N/A in 2002)	2	124 - 125
Population: county area	9	126 - 134
Year of Pop	2	135 - 136
FILLER	61	137 - 197
Year of Data	2	198 - 199

Data Files

All data files outlined above are in the same 84-character record layout format.

The data files are comprised of 84-character data records for governments in the Government ID files with one record per governmental function. If data are unknown for a government, the data fields are filled with 999999999 (nine 9's). If total employment for a government is greater than zero, the Function file will have a minimum of two data records (a total record plus individual function records) for the government.

All payroll and part-time hours data are 31-day monthly equivalent values for March (October prior to 1997). Payroll figures are in whole dollars.

State data file (yystate.dat): The data file is comprised of 84-character data records for governments in the Government ID file with one record per governmental function. All payroll and part-time hours data in the data file are 31-day monthly equivalent values for the month of March (October prior to 1997).

Description	Length	Position
State code (states & DC in alpha sequence)	2	1 - 2
Type of government code: 0 = State	1	3 - 3
County Code (000)	3	4 - 6
Unit Identification Number (000)	3	7 - 9
Supp Code (000)	3	10 - 12
Sub Code (00)	2	13 - 14
FILLER	3	15 - 17
Data Function Code Definitions	3	18 - 20
Full-Time Employees	10	21 - 30
Full-Time Payroll	12	31 - 42
Part-Time Employees	10	43 - 52
Part-Time Payroll	12	53 - 64
Part-Time Hours	10	65 - 74
Full-Time Equivalent Employees	10	75 - 84

Total, by Type data file

(yyempest.dat for non-Census years; yyemptot.dat for Census years)

Description	Length	Position
State Code (states & DC in alpha sequence)	2	1 - 2
Type of summary total code: 0 = U.S. total 1 = state/local total 2 = state only total 3 = local only total 5 = county only total 6 = municipality only total 7 = township only total 8 = special district only total 9 = school district only total	1	3 - 3
FILLER	14	4 - 17
Data Function (Item) Code	3	18 - 20
Full-time Employees	10	21 - 30
Full-time Payroll	12	31 - 42
Part-time Employees	10	43 - 52
Part-time Payroll	12	53 - 64
Part-time Hours	10	65 - 74
Full-time Equivalent Employees	10	75 - 84

Individual Unit Data File

(yyempst.dat for non-Census years; yycempst.dat for Census years)

Description	Length	Position
Identification Number	14	1 - 14
FILLER	3	15 - 17
Data Function (Item) Code	3	18 - 20
Full-time Employees	10	21 - 30
Full-time Payroll	12	31 - 42

Part-time Employees	10	43 - 52
Part-time Payroll	12	53 - 64
Part-time Hours	10	65 - 74
Full-time Equivalent Employees	10	75 - 84

Individual County Area Data Files (yycoar2.dat)

Census years only

Description	Length	Position
State Code	2	1 - 2
FILLER	1	3 - 3
County Code	3	4 - 6
FILLER	11	7 - 17
<u>Data Function (Item) Code</u>	3	18 - 20
Full-time Employees	10	21 - 30
Full-time Payroll	12	31 - 42
Part-time Employees	10	43 - 52
Part-time Payroll	12	53 - 64
Part-time Hours	10	65 - 74
Full-time Equivalent Employees	10	75 - 84